

India-Slovenia Relations

Republic of Slovenia attained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. India recognized Slovenia on 11 May 1992. India supported Slovenia for membership at the UN. Slovenia was admitted into the UN on 23 May 1992.

Opening of Resident Missions- Slovenia opened its resident mission in New Delhi in August 2002. The Mission, initially headed by Charge d'Affaires, was upgraded to Ambassador-level in September 2009. India opened its resident Mission in Ljubljana in February 2007.

High-level Visits - India and Slovenia share cordial bilateral relations. From the Indian side Gen. V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs attended the Bled Strategic Forum (31 Aug-1 Sept 2014); a Parliamentary delegation was led by Smt. Meira Kumar, former Speaker of Lok Sabha (26-30 May, 2013); Smt. Prineet Kaur, MOS (EA) participated at the annual Bled Strategic Forum in 2009, 2010 & 2013; Shri Anand Sharma, then MOS (EA) visited for inauguration of the Chancery premises of Embassy of India (March 2008); MOS for Finance (Revenue) Shri Gingee N. Ramachandran (Jan 2003); MOS for S&T Prof. Y.K. Alagh (Feb 1997).

From Slovenia H.E. Dr. Milan Berglez, President of the National Assembly led a 7-member Parliamentary delegation to India (24-27 Nov, 2015); H.E. Mr. Alojz Peterle, Member, European Parliament and Former PM of Slovenia participated in the World Culture Festival organized by the Art of Living at New Delhi (March 2016); Mr. Peter Macek, State Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science & Sport led a delegation for the CII's Knowledge Expo 2014, New Delhi (Nov 2014); Dy.PM and FM Mr. Karl Erjavec attended the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi (Nov 2013); Mr. Zerjav Radovan, former Dy.PM and Minister for Economic Development and Technology (Jan 2013); former President Dr. Danilo Turk attended the Delhi Sustainable Summit (Feb 2010); State Visit of H.E. Mr. Borut Pahor as PM to India (13-16 June 2011); Former President Dr. Janez Drnovsek attended inauguration of International Conference on Human Values organised by the Art of Living Foundation in Bangalore (Jan 2006) & the Satyagraha Centenary Conference in New Delhi (Jan 2007); other high level visits include those by former Foreign Minister Dr. Dimitrij Rupel (May 1992), Dy.PM for Economic Relations Dr. Dravorin Kracun, Ministers for Science & Technology - Dr. Rado Bohinc, Dr. Lojze Marincek and Dr. Jure Zupan;

Slovene Parliamentary Friendship Group with India- The Parliamentary Friendship Group with India was established on 6 February 2009. Ms. Suzana Lep Simenko is the Chairman of the Slovene Parliamentary Friendship Group with India since 21 May, 2015. She was also a member of the Slovene Parliamentary delegation that visited India in November, 2015. In Nov 2009, the then Chairman of the Friendship Group, accompanied by two more members, visited India at the invitation of Government of India.

Bilateral Agreements/ Protocols/ MOUs

- Agreement on setting up Joint Committee on Bilateral Trade and Cooperation (1993)
- Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1995)
- Agreement between FICCI/ASSOCHAM and the Slovene Chamber of Commerce and Industry to set up Joint Business Council (1995)
- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (1996)
- Cultural Agreement for cooperation in the fields of culture, arts, education, sports and mass media (1996)
- National Centre for Trade Information, India (NCTI) – Chamber of Commerce of Slovenia (CCS) Agreement for reciprocal sharing of information (1997)
- Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (2003)
- Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) – Slovenian Export Corporation (SEC) Cooperation Framework Agreement (2003)

- Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2004)
- MOU between ICCR and University of Ljubljana for establishment of Hindi Chair (2009)
- Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (2011)
- MOU between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Slovenian Institute for Standardization (2011)
- MOU between the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and University of Nova Gorica for Cooperation in the Field of Research and Education (2011)
- MOU for the establishment of Long Term Chair of Hindi at Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (2011)
- MOU between Air India, Aerodrom Ljubljana and Adria Airways (2011)
- Protocol amending the Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2012)
- Agreement on Short-Stay Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports (2013)
- Agreement between Air India and Adria Airways on code-sharing arrangements (2013)
- MOU between PrasarBharati and RTV on Co-operation in Broadcasting (2013)
- MOU between NIMS University of Rajasthan, Jaipur and University of Primorska on Cooperation in the Fields of Education and Science and Research (Nov 2014)
- Agreement on Gainful Occupation of Dependents of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts (April 2015)
- Protocol Amending the Convention and the Protocol for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income (May 2016)
- MOU between Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH and University of Primorska (July, 2016)

India-Slovenia Foreign Office Consultations: There have been eight sessions of the FOCs so far, the last at New Delhi in July 2010. Slovenia will host the next session of FOC at Ljubljana.

Science and Technology: Joint Committee on S&T Cooperation was established by an agreement in 1993. India-Slovenia JWG on S&T met in New Delhi on 19 Nov, 2014 and identified joint projects for implementation. Agreement on S&T Co-operation was extended to cover the period 2015-18.

JCTEC: The bilateral Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation (JCTEC) has so far held eight sessions. The 8th Session of India-Slovenia JCTEC was held on July 16, 2013 in New Delhi. Next JCTEC Session may be held in Ljubljana in 2017.

Bilateral Trade: During Jan-April 2016, the total bilateral trade was € 115.36mn. India exported goods worth € 86.62mn and imported worth € 28.74. In 2015, the total bilateral trade figured at € 306.97mn. India exported goods worth € 234.64 mn and imported merchandise worth € 72.33 mn with balance of trade strongly in favour of India at € 155.31 mn. In 2014, the total bilateral trade in goods stood at € 213.03 mn with India enjoying a trade surplus of € 72.91mn.

GOI Tourism Office participated at the Alpe-Adria Tourism & Leisure Fair in Ljubljana (Jan, 2016); E/I participated at 12th Altermed Fair (March 2016); two business roundtable events entitled "Doing Business with India" were organized in collaboration with the Municipality of Jesenice (May & June 2016). MD of Derewala Group, Jaipur and MD of SPML Infrastructure Pvt.Ltd, India visited Slovenia in July 2016 to explore possibilities for export of gems and jewellery and tie-ups in infrastructure technology for Make in India projects, respectively. A business conference to promote the "Make in India" campaign was organized by the International Trade Fair organisers at Celje (Jan 2015). India was a Focus Country at the annual AlpeAdria International Tourism Show at Ljubljana (Jan 2015); India participated at Dao Yah Fair (Jan 2015) and 11th Altermed Fair at Celje (Mar 2015). A business roundtable entitled "India :New Frameworks for Business and New Business Opportunities" was organized by Embassy of India, in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Slovenia, in Ljubljana (May 2015) to further 'Make in India' initiative

launched by GOI in which high-ranking executives of 19 Slovene companies and Indian PSUs like NALCO and BHEL participated. India has been participating at the Celje International Trade Fair since 2009. In 2014, 18 Indian companies participated at the Fair where as in 2015 (8-13 Sept), the participation increased to 26 companies. India has been participating at Wine Fairs/competitions held at Ljubljana since June 2014, when a selection of wines from India was introduced for the first time in Slovenia. India took part in 51st International Wine Fair 'Vino Ljubljana' (Oct 2015). M/s Pipistrel, the Slovenian maker of ultralight aircraft, signed a deal to deliver 194 trainer aircraft worth Euro 17 mn to India (Oct 2015). India also participated in 45th Nature Health Fair (Nov 2014) & for the first time at the 30th Slovenian Book Fair (Nov 2014).

Slovenia participated in the CII Partnership Summit, Jaipur (Jan 2015); 2nd India-Central Europe Business Forum (ICEBF) at Bangalore (Oct 2015); CII's Knowledge Expo 2014, New Delhi (Nov 2014); 1st ICEBF organised by FICCI in New Delhi (March 2014); two Slovenian companies participated at the Minerals, Metals, Metallurgy & Materials Exhibition, New Delhi (Sept 2014). Slovenian company IskraSistemi participated at the Bangalore Engineering Expo 2014; Gostol participated at Aahar Food & Hospitality Fair in March 2014; Former Minister of Economic Development and Technology, Mr. Zerjav Radovan, led a business delegation to New Delhi, Agra and Kolkata (Jan 2013). A large business delegation accompanied the then PM Borut Pahor during his State Visit to India (June 2011) and visited Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore.

Cultural Cooperation: The Mission has been organizing ICCR sponsored cultural events in collaboration with local co-sponsors which have been widely acclaimed in Slovenia. The Government of Karnataka sponsored Pandit Narasimhalu (2011), Dr. Mysore Manjunath (2012) and Dr. Suma Sudhindra (2013) on the occasion of Indian Republic Day celebrations in Slovenia. A bust of Jawaharlal Nehru was unveiled at Dobrovo, Goriska Brda in May 2013. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi, donated by ICCR, was installed at Slovenj Gradec on 1 October 2010. A bust of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, donated by ICCR, was set up in the Municipality of Maribor (Nov 2011).

The first edition of "Days of India in Slovenia" festival was organized in Jan 2014. Under the rubric of the 2nd edition of Days of India Festival (20-30 Jan 2015) the Mission arranged a series of cultural events like concert of classical Sarod music, painting exhibition showcasing art of SAARC countries "Jaisalmer Yellow" and photo exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi-"My Life is my Message". The Embassy organized the 3rd edition of 'Days of India in Slovenia' in 2016, celebrations for which began on 25 January with inauguration of ICCR sponsored "Phulkari" Exhibition of Indian embroidery from Punjab and Haryana at the National Ethnographic Museum of Slovenia, Ljubljana and a concert of Hindustani classical music. A photo exhibition on Gandhiji was displayed at Nova Fuzine on (29 Jan, 2016). To commemorate the Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore exhibition of his paintings were displayed at Ljubljana (6 May) and at Goriska Brda (8 May). Ms. Ana Jelnikar, an Indologist, delivered a lecture on Tagore. Besides this, films based on short stories by Tagore were also screened. An evening of Indian classical music entitled "Magic of Santoor", at which Maestro Abhay Rustam Sopori played santoor, was organized at Ljubljana (19 May). A week of Indian classical music was organized at five different cities in Slovenia (21-26 May). Rishabh Prasanna, Sandip Banerjee and Nicolas Delaigue - a teacher and performer of classical Hindustani music on Sitar- played bansuri, tabla and sitar, respectively. Celebrations of 2nd IDY 2016, began in Slovenia on 18 June, with 'Family Festival of Yoga in Nature' organised by Yoga Association of Slovenia at Mozirje, Celje at which 1200 people participated. At Ljubljana, IDY was organised by the Faculty of Sports and the Yoga Federation of Slovenia at Ljubljana on 21 June and at other cities by Yoga associations.

A photo exhibition "Facets of India" and screening of 'The Making of Mahatma' were organized at Jesenice (Mar 2015); exhibition of the photos of the North-Eastern region of India was displayed at Slovene Ethnographic Museum, Ljubljana (Mar 2015). A 7-member Theater group "Yatrik" from New Delhi (sponsored by ICCR) and another 7-member theatre group "Banyan Tree Productions"

from Mumbai performed at the 45th Festival of Slovenian Drama (March, 2015). The Banyan Tree Productions won the critique's award. Mission, in association with India Tourism Frankfurt, organized a seminar 'India-Slovenia Day of Partnership in Tourism' in Ljubljana (Mar 2015). Tagore Week was organised in May 2015 which included violin recital of 'RabindraSangeet' by Mr. Hans Vermeersch, a renowned Belgian violinist specializing in contemporary and classical music of the Indian sub-continent, at various cities. Recitation of poems by Tagore and painting exhibition entitled "Three Tagores" at the Ljubljana Conservatory. Hans Vermeersch also performed on the occasion of Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (Oct 2015). An exhibition of photos of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was displayed at Municipal Library of Bled (27 May-18 June) to mark the closing of the year of his 125th Birth Anniversary. The first International Day of Yoga was celebrated in 28 cities of Slovenia on 21 June, 2015. Embassy participated at the 9th DIAFEST, Slovenia's oldest and largest Festival of backpacking tourism and travel photography, Ljubljana (July, 2015). A collection of contemporary Indian poetry featuring 31 male&female authors 'Kavita', was unveiled at the 30th Vilenica International Literary Festival (Sept 2015). Johar Ali Khan, a distinguished violinist of Indian classical music performed at 63rd Ljubljana Festival and other cities (Sept 2015). An exhibition of the original artwork by Shri Chinmoy entitled 'Jharna Kala – Art for Peace' was displayed at the City Museum, Slovenj Gradec (Sept, 2015). A painting exhibition of Sharmila Mohandas, an artist from Chennai, was on display at KvartirnaHiša gallery, Celje (Nov, 2015). Two Indian feature films were also shot in Slovenia in 2015. In 2014, a joint stamp to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru was released (28 Nov). The book - Letters from a Father to His Daughter - was translated into Slovene and released (19 Nov). "INDIA WEEK" was organised across municipal libraries in Ljubljana (Dec). Indian films were screened at film festivals in Slovenia including the Open Isola Film Festival (June 2014), Bled Film Festival (June 2014), and the Ljubljana International Film Festival (Nov 2014). Two Indian films and a commercial were also shot in Slovenia in 2014.

Distinguished Slovenian Professor of Philosophy, Prof. (Dr.) Lenart Skof, University of Primorska, visited India (9-18 March, 2016) under the aegis of Academic Visitors Programme 2015-16. At the invitation of GOI, Gregor Kos, President, Slovenia Yoga Union attended 2-Day International Conference on "Yoga for Body & Beyond" (22 -23 June, 2016) at New Delhi. Gopal Arora, Professor in Delhi University and Secretary of the Antar-Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad, a Delhi-based NGO, was deputed by ICCR to attend International Roma Conference organised by the European Roma Union and Ministry of Culture of Slovenia (March 2016). Secretary, AYUSH visited Slovenia in Sept 2014 and inaugurated AYUSH Information Centre at the Chancery premises. Slovenian delegation led by the Rector of University of Primorska, participated at the 6th World Ayurveda Congress at New Delhi (Nov 2014).

Indian Community - There is a very small Indian community of about 150, including PIOs, which comprises mainly of persons married to Slovenians and a few IT professionals.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Ljubljana website:

<http://indianembassy.si/>

Embassy of India, Ljubljana Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/eoi.ljubljana>

July 2016